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ABSTRACT

Although the details concerning negotiated tuition refer to Catholic schools in Denver (Colorado), the philosophy is applicable to private and church-related schools. The term "negotiated tuition" indicates a method in which tuition rates are set by individual parents and a school official. Assumptions are made that people have a need to give according to their ability, and that people don't lie. Procedures for starting a negotiated tuition plan are offered followed by suggestions for a public relations program, considered essential to the success of a negotiated tuition program. Models of negotiated tuition include a presentation made by a principal of a suburban elementary school in a more affluent area of the city; by a representative from an urban elementary school in a middle class area; and from a low-income inner-city parish with an elementary school. Questions and answers about negotiated tuition, a sample negotiation form, a sample letter to parents, and topics to be covered in a series of inservice training sessions for negotiated tuition are provided. The final section is a summary of schools using negotiated support in the archdiocese of Denver in 1977.
(Author/MLF)

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Negotiated Tuition Plan

EA 013 016

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N E G O T I A T E D T U I T I O N

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INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of Negotiated Tuition is simple. Yet because of its simplicity it can seem to be threatening.
In attempting to initiate a program such as this it seems important to make some assumptions:

1. People have a need to give according to their ability.
2. People don't lie.

Because Negotiated Tuition is a new or different kind of program it is imperative that a proper explanation be given. Negotiated Tuition is more of a concept; therefore, one must be careful to think through the whole concept. This can be done very effectively through the proper channels of committees.
The pastor as leader of the parish should have an understanding as well as the principal. The parish council and education committee must understand what it's all about. Only after these people have discussed at length can one expect any measure of success in implementing the Negotiated Tuition Plan.

Does it work! Answer "yes".
Has it failed! Answer "no".

The implementation of the concept is nearly as diverse as the number of Catholic schools who have adopted it.
Parish councils will most likely want to wrestle through all the "in's" and "out's" as well as all the "if's". This is necessary because it is new and exciting. It is not the traditional way of doing things. To communicate the concept to hundreds of people, although time consuming, is not hard or irksome. It is a happy, fruitful experience.

NEGOTIATED TUITION: BRIEFLY

CONCEPT:

The term "NEGOTIATED TUITION" is used to indicate the method in which tuition rates are set. Parents and a school official privately set the tuition rate.

PROBLEM:

Traditionally, Catholic School administrators have faced the dilemma of tuition rates. They realize that the actual per pupil cost will be from 25% to 75% higher than the amount of the "asking" tuition. At the same time, administrators must consider that our schools were meant to be used by the poor as well as the affluent. The NEGOTIATED TUITION concept takes into consideration both of these problems.

PROCEDURE:

The program was explained to the parents through a PTA meeting, correspondence, and then finally at the negotiating session.

Certain persons were selected to be negotiators. They were selected on the basis of understanding the families and their background, tactfulness, prudence and common sense.

NEGOTIATED TUITION PLAN

The negotiating session took place in a rather confidential setting at the time the parents were registering their child for the next year. (February) The parents could choose their "negotiators". Usually the parents had given some thought about the amount they would pay for tuition, and in the event they could not make a decision, the "negotiator" assisted them as much as possible. In well over 90% of the cases, the tuition was able to be set at this session. The remaining required follow up.

Prior to the negotiating sessions, in-service meetings with the negotiators were held so that basically all would use somewhat the same approach, that is, a deep understanding of the parents' problems as well as a full understanding of our financial needs. We approached the negotiation from a positive standpoint, using the basic concept that mankind has a basic need to give. recognizing the rising costs of living and education, that the amount to be negotiated had to be more than in previous years, except, of course, in those cases where we knew the people could not afford it.

Parents at this negotiating session signed the financial obligation form indicating how much they will pay, including payment schedule - monthly, quarterly, semester, or yearly in advance. (Payments always in advance).

CONCLUSION:

The NEGOTIATED TUITION PLAN is considered successful. It has solved the dilemma problem. It will continue in the future. Since it is a Negotiated Tuition Plan, and since family circumstances change, parents have the opportunity to renegotiate based on changing circumstances.

PARENT'S COMMENTS:

"This is the first time that I can ever remember when people asked me to pay the real cost".

"When I was a kid, my parents could not afford to pay tuition - now I can and I want to".

"Our family is fortunate to have a good income, so we will pledge an additional amount to help some student who is less fortunate".

NEGOTIATED TUITION

Definition

Negotiated Tuition is a program in which a school official discusses in an interview what parents feel they can afford to pay in tuition. The negotiator discusses the per pupil cost and assists the parents in making a financial commitment. Before a Negotiated Tuition Program can successfully be instituted a Public Relations program must be implemented

Public Relations

Each school must tell its story. It is important to use all the professional services and advice available. A well planned program reaching all the various publics or groups is essential. In this way we provide an opportunity for confidence building. Since the people want to hear about their school, to be happy with the school as well as have their children receive the best education possible, we should then plan a program which will do this. We must tell and show people how good we really are. A well planned Public Relations program which is on-going is essential to the success of the Negotiated Tuition Program.

Parent's Priorities

Negotiated Tuition provides parents the opportunity to rethink some of their priorities or commitments. It is not the negotiator's responsibility to question them, but it can be a negotiator's role to discuss it with them. Most parents want to do the best for their children. They want them in the Catholic school (for whatever reason). Otherwise, they would not be sending them or planning on it. We can always assume that they will pay more than they have because they understand what it costs to live. 80% of our budget is in salaries. Parents do change their priorities once we have shown them our own confidence in the school and that they really are getting their money's worth.

Interview

Each family who will have children in the school is asked to register them for the next school year. At this time curriculum explanation should be available so that the parents have some knowledge of what their child will be learning. At this point those explaining this must be positive and enthusiastic about not only the curriculum but these specific children. It might be appropriate for the Registration to be handled as one phase and Negotiated Tuition Interviews as the second phase, and perhaps by different people. Local circumstances will dictate the method. Interviewing is a big job and is as important as it is big.

Parents will discuss the negotiations of tuition with some one who has been trained in this procedure. It usually takes between 10 and 20 minutes for each interview.
There are two important aspects of Negotiated Tuition:

a) the success of the public relations
b) the personality of the negotiator

The negotiator must possess characteristics which you would want if you were the parents negotiating.

Negotiators

It is not essential who negotiates such as priests, sisters, lay - men or women. What is essential is that they have the qualifications. No one is a good or bad negotiator by virtue of their station in life or sex.

Qualifications

Popular, honest, sincere, dedicated, enthusiastic, warm, happy, mature, knowledgable, responsible, understanding, serious and committed. They should be like the salesman you want to wait on you. The "Vibes" must be right.
We must avoid people who do not have most of these characteristics.

Do's

1. Make appointments if you feel this necessary (it's not always necessary).
2. Give them as much time as necessary - usually 10-20 minutes is ample time.
3. Establish a good rapport by greeting them warmly, shaking hands, etc.
4. Review the educational program briefly to set the stage (no time for humility).
5. Talk about kids, especially their kids. They love it.
6. Compliments are appropriate.

Don'ts

1. Don't rush.
2. Don't be fatalistic.
3. Don;t think small.
4. Don't be condescending.
5. Don't make people wait.
6. Don't high-pressure.

Physical Set-up

The physical set-up can best be developed by each school. However, all should consider these points:

1. Place - adequate room - to not only assure confidentiality but room to move around, appropriate signs if necessary such as name of negotiator as well as signs leading to the place. Chairs for waiting should be available.

2. Hosts and Hostesses - There should be enough people acting as hosts and hostesses so that people will feel comfortable. Attend to any need they may have. Coffee, tea, other drinks, cookies might be in order. Happy and friendly hosts are very important, they assist in setting the stage for negotiation.

Time

Most schools use Sunday morning after the masses with follow-up times on weekday evenings - about 6:30 - 8:30.

DEVELOPING A RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

It seems more and more apparent that private and church related schools will make a significant impact on American education and society in the coming decade. In the midst of current educational turmoil, private and church related schools will be viewed as favorable educational options by increasing numbers of parents and students. It also is apparent that school administrators and boards are sensing the new role their schools are to play in serving young people in future years.

Recognizing the projected declines in student populations in years to come, boards and administrators will need to give much more serious attention to their recruitment efforts and procedures if they are to assure stable or increasing school enrollments. Traditional recruitment practices in all likelihood will not assure stable enrollment or institutional security.

Successful recruitment can best happen when:

- A positive school image exists.
- All school leaders embrace recruitment as their responsibility.
- Recruitment is viewed as an ongoing activity within the school requiring advance planning and regular implementation.
- All staff and students, as well as all members of the school faculty, own a sense of responsibility for the school's future.
- Recruitment begins early in the life of a prospective student.
- Parents are viewed as important in the student's choice of school.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT

The following suggests basic elements for successful recruitment with ideas for implementation. School administrators and boards can develop a recruitment strategy as they review which of these elements, expanding and modifying each element to accomodate their school's needs and goals.

I. Creating a Positive Image

School recruitment efforts are often hampered or aborted because the school lacks a positive school image or, having a positive image, fails to project that image in the community it seeks to serve. Effective recruitment is dependent on the existence of a positive school image and projecting that image.

Successful school recruitment can happen best in a setting where good will exists between and among members of the school family and where pride of ownership and involvement is exhibited by them.

A positive school image is dependent upon:

1. A clearly stated (and published) purpose of the school stating the school's view of quality education, service to students and a vision of the future. Parents and students must know in what special way your school will serve them.

2. An attitude which says "pride of ownership". School facilities must express quality, hospitality, efficiency, joy and warmth. Poorly kept facilities do not impress parents or attract students.

3. Good will which expresses itself in the relationship among administrators, board members, staff members, students and the school's public. Special events and activities should be planned regularly to enhance their good feeling about their school to help maintain a positive esprit de corps and high morale. Good will and school image are viewed as the responsibility of all groups and individuals within the school family.

4. A public relations program which includes regular news letters to key people, regular releases to media outlets, and effective use of image and recruitment brochures.

II. Organizing Personnel for Recruitment Tasks

Enrollments can stabilize and increase as individuals and groups within the school family accept their responsibility for recruitment and have a clear understanding of their role and tasks. The following suggests ways of organizing school personnel for recruitment purposes:

1. Key administrators should meet regularly to plan recruitment strategies and to incorporate recruitment program elements.

2. An advisory council for recruitment should be appointed to plan and monitor a comprehensive and continuing recruitment effort. Council members should include key parents, teachers, staff and students.

3. Recruitment assignments should be prepared for teachers, students, and parents. Written recruitment assignments should include tasks such as serving as good will agents, securing prospective names, hosting special events, calling prospects and serving as recruiters in feeder schools.

4. Volunteer groups of parents and friends should be invited and organized to assist in the task of preparing mailings, materials and other office tasks.

5. Materials should be prepared for use by the above groups. Workshops or training sessions should be planned for those who are serving in recruitment services.

III. Planning and Achieving Recruitment Goals

Clearly stated enrollment goals will significantly influence the design of the recruitment program. Specific enrollment goals can be a strong motivating factor for recruiters. Steps for setting and achieving goals include:

1. Develop a master roster list of all prospective students. Begin at the earliest grade level possible. Keep records of all pertinent information regarding campus visits, phone calls by recruiters, etc. Use prospect lists for mailings, invitations to special events, etc.

2. Maintain enrollment data from all feeder schools and other student sources. This is essential for projecting enrollments and setting goals.

3. Set enrollment goals for the next year and subsequent years. Goals should be challenging and yet manageable so that success can be experienced.

4. Monitor registration regularly so that help can be given where low registration appears and success can be shared when goals are acheived.

5. Develop dynamics inherent in setting and achieving goals beginning with administrators, advisory council, staff and students.

6. Develop a master plan and calendar. A recruitment program runs more smoothly when all individuals know and understand the comprehensive program and are informed in advance of all target dates and scheduled events.

IV. Working With Feeder Schools (High Schools)

Stabilized and predictable enrollments are dependent on developing and maintaining strong relations with feeder schools. The following steps will help assure productive relationships with feeder schools and will help assure continuing enrollment from those schools:

1. Establish initial guidelines and policies dealing with feeder schools to assure ongoing relationships and continuity of enrollment. Select main feeder schools as first priority.

2. Select key administrators of your school whose responsibility will be to seek and establish rapport with the principal and key leaders of each feeder school. Invite principals and key leaders of feeder schools to become partners in helping your school maintain its image and enrollment.

3. Request selected faculty members from your school to plan events, both academic and social, for feeder school teachers and students. Use these occasions to project the image of your school as a quality school with distinctive purpose and to provide frequent opportunities for prospective students to experience your school's hospitable environment.

4. Seek to establish a recruitment committee or individual recruiters within your feeder schools.

5. Plan visits by staff and students of your school to feeder schools as well as planning events and activities for students from feeder schools on your campus.

6. Request newly enrolled students at your school to provide names and addresses of prospective students in feeder schools. When visiting feeder schools, attempt to direct your attention particularly to those individuals.

7. Consider the possibility of offering a pre-registration or pre-enrollment program to students in feeder schools so that they may register one or several years prior to enrollment (some schools offer pre-payment programs for pre-registered students).

8. Plan and sponsor campus events for all prospective students. Plan events so that each prospective student feels important and begins to experience a "sense of belonging".

9. Select faculty members of your school to communicate and counsel with parents of prospective students regarding their role in planning their child's future.

10. Plan on-campus events which give recognition to outstanding students from feeder schools and give encouragement to students and/or parents who remain "on-the-fence".

V. Preparing and Using Recruitment Materials

Printed and visual materials can be used effectively to enhance your school's recruitment effort. Printed materials, errorless and attractive, should seek to project your school's positive image, answer the important questions of students and their parents and to express the school's interest in and concern for the prospective student. Basic recruitment materials include:

1. Current brochures which report the basic information about your school.

2. Brochures or other printed pieces which answer the prospective student's questions.

3. A series of appropriate letters for "keeping in touch" regularly with each prospective student from the point of first contact to enrollment.

4. Specialized brochures which report distinctive aspects or programs of your school.

5. Slide/sound presentations and film strips can be very effective for use with groups of students or parents. These materials must be updated regularly.

6. Dignified ads or announcements for use by various media help project your school's image and attract the attention of parents and prospective students.

Conclusion

It is easy for school boards and administrators to become apathetic and discouraged in the face of student population declines and population movements. There is no need to become discouraged or to feel victimized by statistical projections. Increasing efforts toward maintaining distinctive quality education coupled with intensified recruitment efforts will be an important element in educational management for the decade ahead. Careful planning with long range projections can help assure continued quality education without threatening institutional survival.

Catholic schools will make a significant contribution to American education and society in future years as their boards, administrators and teachers project a positive attitude toward the future and vigorously pursue distinctive Christian education for young men and women.

IDENTIFYING PUBLICS FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

As indicated above a Public Relations Program is essential to the success of a Negotiated Tuition Program. A confidence must be built in the community about the program and future of the school. It is much like the advertising agencies do attempting to build a need within the parents, or at least a desire to provide their children with the quality program available to them in this particular school.

It is an over-all public awareness program and must be geared to many different groups of people so that we

1. Have happy thoughts about the school
2. Have confidence in the school

As we know, one bad bit of (mis) information can cause untold problems and can devistate in one day what it has taken years to build.

An on-going awareness of Public Relations must be constantly in everyone's mind, especially the principal, who is the educational leader of the school. Hence, it would seem proper to assign the initial responsibility to the principal and a committee to carry out the program.

There are various groups or "publics" which each school can identify who should be reminded or initiated to the particular school's educational program. These are the groups that we would want to know or have know more about our "fantastic" students, teachers and parents.

Each group or "public" might be approached from a different standpoint based on your perception and evaluation of the special uniqueness that you have.

The following list identifies various groups or "publics". Prepare your strategy for those whom you wish to interpret your school by planning a program or task. Appoint someone to be responsible for complimenting it as well as a date on which it should start and conclude.

IDENTIFYING YOUR PUBLICS

PUBLIC	TASK	DIRECTOR	DATE
A. Parish Public			
1. Pastor			
2. Associate Pastors			
3. Parish Council			
4. Education Committee			
5. Parents			
6. Parishioners With Children In School			
7. Parishioners Without Children In School			
8. Parishioners Without Children Young-Old			
9. Siblings			
10. Relatives - Grandparents			
11. Neighbors			
12. Senior Citizens			
B. School Public			
1. Principal			
2. Faculty			
3. Children			
4. Custodial Staff			
5. Office Staff			

PUBLIC	TASK	DIRECTOR	DATE
C. Interschool Public (Articulation)			
1. Grade Schools with High Schools			
2. High Schools with Grade Schools			
D. Archdiocesan			
1. Bishops			
2. Vicar for Education			
3. Chancery Staff			
4. Superintendent			
E. Local-City Community			
1. Neighbors			
2. City Council			
3. County Commissioners			
4. Protective Agencies			
5. Business Community			
F. Educational Agencies			
1. Universities			
2. Colleges			
3. Superintendent of Public Education - All Districts			
4. Community Colleges			
G. Special			
1. Catholic Community Services			
2. Religious Communities			
3. Television			
4. Radio			
5. Newspapers			

MODELS OF NEGOTIATED TUITION

The following presentation was made by a principal of a Suburban Elementary School in a more affluent area of the city.

This school has approximately 300 students and all negotiating is done by the principal. The number of families numbers about 164. Sister felt that for the first year of negotiated tuition, parents might like to talk to just one person. Talking to the parents proved to be such an advantageous experience that she will continue to do the negotiating herself until numbers make it impossible.

In the situation of this particular elementary school, negotiated tuition proved to be the only way to go. Previous to this plan, subsidy had been from $40,000 to $48,000 annually. This proved to be an equity because students were coming from other parishes where there was no elementary school, but the parishes were not helping to support the program. In spite of rising costs, subsidy in a two year period has been reduced to $18,000. Sister states that they offer an A-1 education, it is a happy school, they are proud of it, and she credits much of this to negotiated tuition.

This is the method used in the school. There should be remote preparation and ongoing preparation. In remote preparation, the first thing to have is a positive attitude. A positive attitude toward negotiated tuition will be carried over and reflected in the interview. Another aspect of remote preparation on the part of the administrator is one of publicity and public relations. This is ongoing and is essential to the concept. A positive attitude will affect publicity and public relations. This can be done through a monthly newsletter, notifying parents of students who are improving, newspaper publicity, open house, etc. At any rate, public relations is a very important element. Prior to negotiated tuition, there will be a notice in the newspaper. If people are kept informed about their school, it is much easier to psychologically separate them from their money.

The more proximate preparation on the part of the school is to have a budget prepared. After arriving at the per pupil cost from the budget, the school prepares commitment cards. The negotiator must have a positive attitude. If the negotiator feels it won't work, then it won't. The idea is that you have a good product to sell to interested parents and interested students, and the job is an important one - you must get as much money as possible from the parents but you must do it in a tactful way. This is why inservice is very important if you are going to use other negotiators besides yourself.

The next very important factor is to schedule interviews. Set aside a time for doing nothing but negotiating. A notice was sent home stating that one of the requisites for admission to the school was an interview. It was indicated in the notice that tuition was not the only purpose of the interview - parents could ask any questions they desired, make comments and suggestions, and talk over any problems. They were informed that it would be a two-way conference. It worked out very well, a separate time must be set aside for new students. Therefore, in the case of this school with only one negotiator, a period of four weeks was spent on interviews.

Therefore, remote preparation involves positive attitude, publicity, public relations. For the more proximate task, you have preparation of budget, arriving at per pupil cost, commitment cards, and negotiators.

The actual interview is not conducted in the office unless it is absolutely necessary. When parents arrive, have something pleasant to say. Try to have something to say about the children. When it comes time to negotiate, Sister states that they have an excellent education to offer and they don't want to make any cuts in it. She also states that this is a trust game - parents trust the school to provide the best possible education - the school trusts the parents to pay as much as possible to finance this education. Use "your child" in the conversation as much as possible. Approach it from how much it costs per month. $40.00 per month goes down easier than $400.00 per year. Present the commitment card. Included in the card is the actual cost to educate the child. Always start from the top amount when negotiating. Allow them to take the card home if they ask. However, if they are not able to pay the full amount, ask that they see you personally for the purpose of arriving at an agreed amount.

In the case of non-Catholics, there is no negotiating. They must pay the full amount, but this is not a problem. They expect it. They know that the Catholic parents also contribute to the parish.

At the end of the interview, thank them - advise them to be sure to come back if they have any further questions or need anything. If you choose to do so, send out thank you notes of some sort. In this particular school, that method has paid dividends.

In the first year of negotiated tuition, 30% of the families were paying the full cost. The second year, 46% are paying the full cost. This is regardless of the number of children from a family.

It is true that negotiated tuition through interview takes time. But, anything worthwhile takes time, and presently we have more time than money.

* *

The following presentation was made by a representative from an <u>Urban Elementary School</u> in a middle class area.

For a period of time, this particular school charged a small tuition and from there went to a stewardship type of program. Then, through the sale of some properties, a revolving fund was established, but was soon becoming depleted. Many changes were being made - administration, curriculum, etc. A committee was appointed to make a study of future financing of Catholic education. The study was made over a period of six months. Among the plans throughout the country that was considered was that of negotiated tuition. The school would be going from a no tuition plan to a proposed $450.00 per pupil cost. It was go out or go up. So the plan was initiated in an effort to go up.

The negotiating committee consisted of the Assistant Pastor, who was also the School Administrator, two lay people, and a Sister. The two lay people were for a period of a few years involved in parish finances and had the confidence of the parishioners. At the same time, the school moved into a public relations program. This is basic. Flyers were prepared with the assistance of the faculty to give people a look at the school. It involved some of the school's history, a word from the administrator, pictures, curriculum, a message from the faculty, and a few thoughts from the principal. In the same year, the school went into a pre-school and kindergarten for the first time. Post cards were sent directly to the pre-schooler by name. They were all invited to the 10:00 Mass on Sunday to meet together. They were asked to invite their parents and told they could register at that time if they chose. At communion time, a holy card was given to the children since they could not receive communion. In no time at all, registrations for both pre-school and kindergarten were closed.

A mailing also was sent out to grade school students asking why they wanted to attend the school, what kind of a school they thought it was, and how they thought the student was viewed. Other mailings were sent out asking people to "take a look" at the science program, social studies, fine arts - the idea being to get everyone looking. Religious education was presented as the total Parish concept. The idea was successful in that the people were made aware of the educational aspects before talking about tuition.

Schools have never been involved in selling - but, you learn to do what you have to do. Parents already knew that something had to be done about finances. A letter was sent out in March advising of coming registration and financial support, stating that mutual trust would dictate what the parents could and would pay to have their child educated. It was also brought out that the interview would provide parents with an opportunity to speak of their own interests, ideas, etc. A planning sheet was also enclosed with the mailing. This gives parents an opportunity to discuss what they will pay before arriving at the school. Again, start at the top. By mailing the planning sheet, the initial shock of the true cost is already over.

People were very receptive. From no tuition at all, the first year resulted in an average of $268.00 per child. For out of parish, it averaged about $368.00 per child. It had already been decided to accept no less that $350.00 per child for those outside the parish; however, no one asked for less. By January, 68% of tuition has been collected. Since enrollment has increased with this plan, we now notify parents that enrollment is limited and present students will be given first chance. Needless to say, this makes negotiations easier. Pre-school and kindergarten, of course, has helped enrollment because parents keep their children in our school. Enrollment went from 373 to 485, with only half of the increase being in pre-school and kindergarten. Enrollment must close at 500.

* *

The following presentation is from a Pastor from a low income Inner City Parish with an elementary school.

This parish went from 1500 families down to 230. Black people moved in and the whites flew out. The school went from 690 children to 240. It is now 92% black, 50% non-Catholic.

About three years ago, a large scale public relations program was initiated. Poor as they were, they hired a public relations firm for $600 a month for ten months. No matter what the children did, they had it publicized on radio, in the newspapers, and on television. It brought the school to the public eye very successfully. No one can be approached for funds if they don't know who you are or what you are trying to do. A year was spent doing this. During that time, the Pastor read an article on the concept of negotiated tuition. In this situation, it was a blessing. They soon found that planning was very important. The Finance Committee was approached and the concept was approved. The following week a meeting was held with the Home and School Executive Board plus about seven loyal parishioners who had children in the school. The reaction was that it would never work. The word "negotiation" turned people off. It was explained what it meant and eventually they accepted the concept. The people were asked not to talk about it as the concept could be misinterpreted until it was fully explained.

A letter was sent home to the parents announcing an emergency meeting - that was all. They were told they must be present. Knowing their people, the parish felt they should give parents time to think about the plan before having a personal interview. Attendance at the meeting was about 98%. Those who could not attend notified the school and arrangements were made to speak to them separately. The Superintendent of Schools was invited to the meeting to give a talk. The principal also talked, and a father of 14 children also spoke on the values of the school, etc. Then it was explained to them exactly what negotiated tuition was, and that they would be given about two weeks to think it over. They were also given a planning sheet.

In the case of this school, the Pastor felt it was very important for a priest to be a negotiator. He found that during the interviews, parents opened up in a way that they do not do even in their own homes. There is a definite relationship between the material and the spiritual. People who do not contribute materially to the parish have a spiritual problem.

Among the negotiators were the Pastor, the principal, three faculty members, and three parents. Two negotiators were at each interview, one of which was either the Pastor or the principal. It worked out well, but since its initiation, the Pastor has decided that he and the principal will do all of the negotiating in the future. There were training sessions for the negotiators previous to the interviews. Negotiators were assigned specifically to parents. Incidentally, on the night of the meeting, some parents volunteered immediately to pay the entire amount; however, it was explained that an interview was desired anyway. Two weeks were set aside for negotiations; however, arrangements were made with parents whenever it was convenient if they could not make it at specified times.

Being on time is very important. Also, interviews were held in the learning center, which was a very homey setting. You will find people to be very honest - you must trust them as they trust you. They must know that the interview is held in strict confidence. A tuition agreement is made and the parents are informed that they will be notified when the agreement is accepted. There were four cases where the Pastor felt the family could pay more and they were so informed. The parents paid the entire amount.

Because of the large percentage of non-Catholics in the school, non parishioners paid directly to the school and parishioners paid to the parish. The Finance Committee followed up to see how tuition was coming in. When parents were not doing too well, the pastor in turn followed up. There were situations where renegotiation had to take place. This is necessary in some cases and it takes the burden off the parents and creates good public relations.

Through the plan of negotiated tuition, income went from $33,000 to $69,000. The parish previously subsidized 70% of the expenses and now is down to 30%. They feel they can raise the amount of money needed to take care of the 30%.

In this parish, a second envelope is passed out to people for Sunday collections called school support. It is for those who do not have children in school but feel it is important to have a school. Many have taken advantage of this and support it. It appears now that it might be better to go to the concept of "student aid" rather than school support.. It seems that it would be more personal.

Even though this is a poor area, people want their school - they are interested and will support it.

* *

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Do you negotiate with all parents - even if they agree to pay the full cost or more?

A. Yes. It is important to have everyone sign the form as the school also wants to know what the schedule of payments will be.

Q. Should appointments be made for negotiating tuition?

A. Some do, most don't. I would prefer not but it then becomes important not to make people wait. Have a host or hostess to take care of them. Coffee, etc. is appropriate. Hosts and hostesses can be of tremendous service to create a benign atmosphere. (Like the coach before and at half-time of the game).

Q. Do you negotiate non-Catholics?

A. A policy should be established. Some few say they must pay the full cost. Others feel more so that they will pay the full cost. Yet others feel that they should be negotiated just like Catholics. Usually a discussion will solve the problem. Personally, I feel that the answer lies in whether you are at capacity or not. I feel that if there is a capacity, Catholics come first.

Q. When is negotiating done - what month?

A. The best time is in February or March for the following school year. It is wise to have negotiations with course selection or registration. Parents have already committed themselves. Just as important is the fact that by doing this, you already have a pretty good idea of how many students will be attending and how much the budget will be.

Q. Why is it that the people who are benefiting have to carry all of the burden? Even in the public sector, people have been conditioned to the fact that their tax money is going to go to schools. Doesn't the Church have a mission - part of which is schools?

A. The truth is, in many diocese, subsidy has been stopped to schools because it is too much of a drain on resources - the cost is too great. While it is true that schools are still subsidized by parishes or other sources because all people simply cannot pay the full cost - particularly when they have three or four children in school - the idea is to cut down on subsidy as much as possible.

Q. In the two years that negotiated tuition has been used, what has been the percentage of increase in income?

A. About 21% overall. In some schools it has been better. Again, it depends on who is negotiating, and timing is important. A guideline can be that if you planned on raising tuition 10% to 15%, you can plan on about 25% through negotiated tuition. Through negotiated tuition, the increase is always higher. Also, through this method new people coming into the school will always pay more, particularly in areas where tuition has previously been much too low.

Q. Do you find that most people pay what they say they will pay? In other words, do they pay better than when tuition was at a set rate?

A. The percentage of people who don't pay is about the same.

Q. How many negotiators would you need?

A. This is a matter of choice or personal preference; however, one (1) negotiator for 20 families seems good.

Q. How can you evaluate effectively to know if parents are paying as much as they can?

A. It can only be a rough estimate. You will find, however, that you can pretty much read people and their honesty. After some experience a negotiator picks up information or vibrations.

Q. Do you ask the parents point blank what they make?

A. No. You are trying to get them to commit themselves. We find that some parents volunteer this information. Also, what a person makes is not the only concern - no one can say what unusual expenses they may have. It has to be their own commitment as to what they will pay.

Q. It is not true that as one is negotiating, they must know ahead of time just how much aid or subsidy will be forthcoming?

A. It is true that you must know if subsidy is available and how much; however, you must always keep in mind that subsidy should be kept down as much as possible, and that subsidy should be used strictly on the basis of need.

Q. Wouldn't it be better to state to the parents what contributed services are of both religious and lay teachers so that parents can know to what extent the per pupil contribution is on the part of teachers?

A. This could be very appropriate depending on your own particular community.

Q. How do you handle people who want to know during an interview what other people are paying?

A. Confidentiality is emphasized and about all you can do is talk around it and not answer the question.

Q. Why don't you start out at a higher cost than actual since there are families who cannot pay the full amount?

A. It is important to educate the people as to what the true cost is, and since the number of people who can pay more is so small, it may not be worth going that route. However, for those that you know can pay more, it is certainly advisable to point this out and ask them for a tax deductible donation.

Q. When parents find out for the first time what the true cost is and realize they have been taking charity previously, do you lose students because they feel they can't afford to pay the true cost and don't want to take charity?

A. Not really. Some feel that as they cannot do too much now, in the future they will help even after the kids are out of school. We must emphasize that the financial policy is that we negotiate based on the ability of the people to pay, that becomes their tuition; their ability to pay.

Q. How do you know when a person has come up with as much as they can pay?

A. There are very few who play the "cat and mouse" game. However, you can tell when this is happening and all you can do is keep the pressure on until you feel they have come up with a fair amount. You do not agree or disagree with the person.

Again, it is recommended that registration and course selection take place before negotiations. Have the people locked in before you start talking money.

When negotiating, one of the best methods of keeping the pressure on is silence - the negotiator should not talk too much. However, only keep the pressure on when you prudently feel they really could afford more. You might attempt to have them pay monthly, e.g., $40 per month ...for 12 months. That could be $80 more than the $400 they were thinking.

Q. What time of the day do you set aside for negotiating?

A. Anytime. During the school day, after school, evenings. Depending on your own situation, weekends can be used too. In elementary schools, do it after masses on Sunday and one or two evenings.

Q. Do you run into problems where parents are reluctant or embarrassed to come in to negotiate?

A. Experience has shown that this so far has not happened. In a few instances where parents have not come in, a phone call is made and an appointment is made. There usually is a good reason why they had not come in at the appointed time. Parents refusing to come in has not been a problem.

Q. Does the student accompany the parents for the interview?

A. Usually no. However, in some cases - particularly at the high school level - it could happen that by having the student accompany the parents, you may get $200 more. In some cases, the student agrees to pay part of the tuition.

Q. Do you have problems getting lay people to act as negotiators?

A. No. Most of them are lay.

Q. Isn't it a problem to get lay people when so many hours of their time are needed to do this?

A. No. Many are happy to be invited to do this - they consider it a contribution to the school. However, it is true that we try to do as much as possible during the day. But, since parents work, it must go into the evening hours.

Q. Do you get any flack from Pastors in that you are talking too much money from a family and they are not contributing to the parish as much?

A. In the case of high schools - no. In the case of parish elementary schools there is always a fear that the people will drop their parish contribution. However, there seems to be an increase in parish revenue from school parents. The gross income of the parish always goes up because more tuition is collected. The parish Sunday collection goes up in proportion to the knowledge the non-school families have about negotiated tuition because they want to assist to a greater extent because the school families are doing more.

SAMPLE I

Name & Address of School
Negotiation Form
_____Year

Parent's Names_____

Address_____
Street City Zip

Telephone_____ Religion - Catholic _____
Non-Catholic _____

Parish You Financially Support

_____

Student's Name(s)	School Attended Current Year	Grades in the Fall
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Total Number of Children in Catholic Schools _____
Total Number of Other Persons Dependent Upon You_____
Total Dependents _____

Per Pupil Cost $_____ X No. of Students_____ = Total Cost $_____

We Pledge the following amount in support of the total cost $_____

Methods of Payment

_____	Yearly	One Payment
_____	Semester	Two Payments
_____	Quarterly	Four Payments
_____	Monthly	Monthly None or Twelve Payments

In addition to the above financial commitment, we pledge our time and talent in the following manner:_____

_____

A $_____registration fee per child is payable at negotiation/registration. This fee is non-refundable and will/will not be applied to the total pledge.

Parent's Signature and/or other Responsible Party

_____ _____
Date

Negotiator

_____ _____
Date

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT FORM

SAMPLE II

DATE:_____

NAME: (PARENT/GUARDIAN)_____

ADDRESS:_____

CITY_____ STATE_____ ZIP_____

TELEPHONE_____ CATHOLIC_____ NON-CATHOLIC_____

PARISH YOU FINANCIALLY SUPPORT_____

NAME STUDENTS IN THIS SCHOOL:

1. _____ GRADE_____

2. _____ GRADE_____

3. _____ GRADE_____

4. _____ GRADE_____

PER PUPIL COST IS $_____ X NUMBER OF STUDENTS_____ = TOTAL [ ]

WE COMMIT THE FOLLOWING _____

REGISTRATION (non refundable) _____

TOTAL PARENT COMMITMENT [ ] _____

BALANCE DUE _____

OTHER _____

REQUEST FROM EDUCATION FUND _____

TOTAL [ ]

METHODS OF PAYMENT (Please check one)

___YEARLY_____	One Payment - September 1
___SEMESTER_____	Two Payments - September 1, January 1
___QUARTERLY_____	Four Payments - Sep 1, Nov 1, Jan 1, Mar 1
___MONTHLY (8 months)_____	Eight Payments - Sept. 1 through April 1
___MONTHLY (9 months)_____	Nine Payments - Sept. 1 through May 1
___MONTHLY (12 months)_____	Twelve Payments - July 1 through June 1

COMMENTS_____

_____

I understand that the above is my tuition commitment for the school year.

PARENT'S SIGNATURE_____

SCHOOL OFFICIAL_____

SCHOOL_____

SUMMARY
SCHOOLS USING NEGOTIATED SUPPORT
DENVER METROPOLITAN AREA
ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER
8 NOVEMBER 1977

1. Parish "A"

Cost.....1977-78 = $418/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $354/pupil (240% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1974-75 = $104/pupil

2. Parish "B"

Cost.....1977-78 = $522/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $204/pupil (172% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1975-76 = $75/pupil

3. Parish "C"

Cost.....1977-78 = $480/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $200/pupil (33% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1976-77 = $150/pupil

4. Parish "D"

Cost.....1977-78 = $525/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $365/pupil (174% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1973-74 = $133/pupil ($25/pupil in 1972-73)

5. Parish "E"

Cost.....1977-78 = $680/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $297/pupil (40% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1975-76 = $212/pupil

6. Parish "F"

Cost.....1977-78 = $676/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $327/pupil (263% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1975-76 = $90/pupil

7. Parish "G"

Cost.....1977-78 = $540/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $327/pupil (66% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1976-77 = $190/pupil

8. Parish "H"

Cost.....1977-78 = $639/pupil
Negotiations.....1977-78 = $236/pupil (18% increase)
Last Year of Tuition.....1975-76 = $200/pupil ($85 in 1974-75)

NOTE:
The tuition amounts indicated were the published tuition rates, but do not necessarily reflect the actual average amounts collected. Negotiations amounts may also vary depending on actual amount of receipts to the program.

Sample Letter to Parents

Date

Dear Parents,

It is the desire of the Education Committee of the school to explain to you the need for a negotiated tuition program and the necessary plans to implement it.

In the past, parents were given a set tuition which they assumed was the cost of educating their children. In reality, it paid only thirty percent of the actual cost of educating their child. The balance was paid from the general parish fund.

This new program was initiated to place the school on a more self-sufficient basis and to lower the subsidy obligation of the parish so that it can meet the many needs of other programs in the parish. We know there are many parents who can afford to pay the full cost of educating their children. We also realize that there are families desiring a Catholic education for their children who cannot absorb the full cost. The negotiated tuition program takes everyone into consideration. This is why we feel, after studying several possibilities, that negotiating on an individual basis is the only equitable way.

It has been determined in drafting the new school budget that it will cost $540 to educate a child for the school year 1977-78. We want you to know this. The negotiated tuition program simply asks, "How much of this can you afford?" We want you to establish your priorities and make the decision. In any case, no Catholic child wishing a quality Catholic oriented education will be turned away because of lack of funds. Non-Catholics must pay the full tuition for each child. Families who cannot pay the full amount may wish to contribute in other ways. Your time, talent and service to the parish can be considered. Therefore, no one need feel that he is not doing his share.

Families who can afford to pay more than the full tuition are encouraged to participate in the Student Financial Trust Fund. This fund, which is tax deductible, will be used to defray school expenses. Families who do not have children in school can also contribute to this special fund and see their money invested in a child's future - what better gift could one desire that to see a child grow in a Christian educational environment!

How will the negotiated tuition program be implemented? We request that all parents attend the next regularly scheduled PTT meeting on March 8th at 7:30 p.m. At this time you will be able to ask questions of members of the Parish Council, Education Committee, Sub-committee on Education and the negotiators who will be present. Then, on March 10th, 13th and 15th, registration will take place. At that time, you'll meet with the negotiator of your choice to sit down privately and discuss tuition. We have no intention whatsoever of asking for proof of your income.

A registration fee of $15 per family is to be paid at the time of registration. It will be applied to your tuition. It is not refundable. There will not be an additional charge for books as in the past, as we have made this part of the total tuition cost.

Schools that have implemented a negotiated tuition program have found it to be beneficial. With your thoughtful concern and support, we will be able to continue to provide your children a quality education.

Sample

IN SERVICE TRAINING SESSIONS FOR NEGOTIATED TUITION

MEETING I - GENERAL INTRODUCTION
Present - Pastor - Principal - Parish Council Reps - Education Committee Reps

1. Introduction and background
2. Basic assumptions
3. Negotiated tuition
4. Its successes
5. Parish uniquenesses
6. In depth consideration
7. Principal and public relations
8. Negotiators
9. Qualifications desirable
10. Number of negotiators
11. Questions and discussion
12. How to prepare for Meeting II

MEETING II - IN SERVICE FOR NEGOTIATORS
Present - same as Meeting I and the negotiators

1. Introduction and background
2. Basic assumptions
3. Negotiated tuition
4. Role and function of negotiators
5. Qualifications
6. Do's and don'ts
7. Role playing
8. Questions and discussion
9. How to prepare for Meeting III

MEETING III - PRESENTATION OF PARISH PLANS
Present - same as Meeting II

1. General introduction
2. Presentation of each participant's plans
3. Critique of plans by the audience
4. Discussion
5. Preparations for Meeting IV

MEETING IV - PRESENTATION TO PARISH
Present - This meeting to be held at the local school

1. Those present to be determined by the individual parish or school
2. Dates - Time - Format
3. Presenters
4. Discussion

MEETING V - EVALUATION MEETING
Present - Pastor - Principal - Parish Council Reps - Education Committee Reps - Negotiators

1. Each participating school to present their own evaluation recognizing their successes and plans for improvement